

tweet. It was a graph showing gas prices had dropped by 2 cents over a week. The caption was “Thanks, Joe Biden.” I actually thought it was a joke. It was serious. They actually said: Hey, good, the price of gas is up \$1.25 since he took office, but it dropped 2 cents last week, and let’s celebrate the success of Joe Biden.

This is just another example of Democrats’ bad math. It is an example also of Democratic leaders who are completely out of touch. Gas is up \$1.25 a gallon since Joe Biden took office. A 2-cent drop is hardly enough.

So here is my 2 cents’ worth: The American people don’t want pennies from Joe Biden; they want a refund from the last election. That is what they deserve. They want affordable, available, reliable American energy.

Joe Biden said last week:

I have used every tool . . . to address price increases.

On the contrary. President Biden has used every tool to drive up prices. He has attacked American energy. He has driven up costs for all Americans. He has shut down the Keystone Pipeline. He is threatening other pipelines. He has blocked oil and gas leases on Federal land. He has threatened to raise taxes on the production of natural gas. We are now producing about 2 million barrels of oil a day less than before the pandemic.

The Secretary of Transportation thinks he has a simple solution to the energy crisis. This is what Pete Buttigieg said. He said it is easy. He said last week that families who buy electric cars “never have to worry about gas prices again.” Well, it is simply false. You would think somebody as educated as the Secretary of Transportation would intuitively say: Gas prices affect grocery prices. Gas prices affect retail prices and the price of just about everything else.

Look, even for the Biden administration, this is really out of touch with mainstream America or people who live anywhere outside the bubble of the beltway. People who are struggling with inflation can’t afford to go out and buy an electric vehicle. Seniors and families just starting out aren’t going to go out and buy an \$80,000 electric vehicle.

We know who buys these luxury vehicles. More than 80 percent of the Federal subsidies for electric vehicles go to people making more than \$100,000 a year, and, unlike the rest of the people on the roads, these drivers use the roads for free. Yet Democrats make sure to include electric vehicle owners on their shopping list this year.

This bill would give \$12,500—\$12,500—to couples making up to half a million dollars a year if they buy a luxury electric vehicle. This includes vans, SUVs, and trucks costing up to \$80,000. The bill also includes \$900 payouts to people who buy electric bicycles.

It has already been a long December for the American people, and we are only at December 7. Yet it must be an

exciting time for the Democrats’ favorite groups. Democrats have always liked to play Santa Claus, and this year, they have a list of who they consider America’s good little boys and girls. Who is on the list? Well, as I said a few minutes ago, it is illegal immigrants, union bosses, professional activists, and the millionaires who live in the penthouses of New York and the mansions of San Francisco and Hollywood. Working-class, Middle America, those families—they are the ones who are going to get stuck with the bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to complete my remarks prior to the scheduled votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO RON BARBER

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, today, I rise to honor one of Southern Arizona’s own—known to many here as former Congressman Ron Barber—for a long and impactful tenure in public service. Ron has been a pillar of Southern Arizona for decades. He is also a close friend and trusted adviser to both me and Gabby.

Ron has deep roots in Tucson. His dad was stationed at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base when Ron was a teenager. Ron attended Rincon High School and graduated from the University of Arizona. He married his high school sweetheart, Nancy, who is here today, and built his family and his home and his career in Tucson, AZ.

Safe to say, Ron embodies what it means to be a Tucsonan. It is written everywhere, from the art that hangs in his house to the bumper stickers on his car, and there are a lot of them. His love of Tucson is something that rubs off on others—myself included.

I first met Ron at a meeting when Gabby was hiring folks to begin launching her first campaign for Congress. At the time, Ron had just retired from his senior post at the Division of Developmental Disabilities. He had spent decades serving as an advocate for families and vulnerable populations.

For almost anyone, that would be a sufficient career in public service but not for Ron Barber. Ron was moved by Gabby’s commitment to serving others. Now, he may not have had any experience in politics, but he showed up ready to help send Gabby to the U.S. Congress. Now, I wondered “Who is this guy?” but never really had to wonder again. He believed in her, and he did it early on. That is what makes Ron who he is—always believing, always early. And this is still true today. Really, Ron is literally always early to each and every event that he has staffed me for, and I am pretty sure that is the case with every person he has served alongside.

His punctuality is matched by his generosity and his knowledge of South-

ern Arizona. That is why when Gabby was elected, she wanted him on her team. He joined as her district director, her eyes and ears back home.

On January 8, 2011, Ron was doing that job when a gunman opened fire at the Congress on Your Corner event. He was standing next to his boss. Gabby was shot in the head. Ron was shot in the face and the leg. Eleven others were injured. Six died. We could have lost him that day too.

Those events rattled the Tucson community that Ron loves so much, and there was so much grief. But in the days, months, and years that followed, we found out just how strong our community was because of people like Ron Barber. Southern Arizona needed Ron, and Ron needed Southern Arizona.

Even through his own injury, he was there for me and Gabby and our family and countless others, as selfless as always. It is that exact selflessness that meant Ron never thought of himself as the right person to run for Gabby’s seat after she stepped down.

I remember sitting in a room with Ron and Gabby during her recovery. We were discussing what was next for Gabby and who would run for her seat in the House of Representatives. There was a long list of names that was thrown out, and at the end, Gabby said that it should be Ron. He was sitting right there, and I think he was probably pretty shocked, but, you know, he wasn’t exactly in a position to refuse, either. He was reluctant at first but eventually rose at the chance to continue serving the community he loved in a way that he never imagined—in the U.S. Congress—and he did that job with grit and independence.

Ron fought to protect our military installations. He worked on lowering healthcare costs and to get mental health services to Arizonans and Americans across the country. He was a public servant through and through or better yet, a “citizen legislator”—a term he used to describe his vision for Washington lawmakers.

After leaving Congress, Ron continued finding ways to serve. When Congresswoman ANN KIRKPATRICK was elected to his old seat, Ron went back to work as her district director for nearly 2 years. For Ron, it is never about ego; it is only about helping in whatever way he could and wherever he could.

Then, the day after my election last year, I called Ron and asked him to serve on my transition team.

And then I asked him to join my office as our southern Arizona director, and he signed up for that as well, once again delaying his retirement to go back into public service one more time.

I can’t tell you what an asset it has been for our office and for the people of Arizona in that role.

Now, we are going to miss Ron, but we also know that he is not really going anywhere either. While Ron might be retiring from his day job, he will still volunteer his time at several

organizations in Tucson that impact his neighbors in ways that are unique to them and to him. In fact, a couple weeks ago, I saw Gabby trying to sign him up for something. And our southern Arizona community will be better for it.

On top of being an extraordinary leader, Ron is a family man; a supportive and loving husband to Nancy, father to Jenny and Crissi, and grandfather to Kieran, Tillie, Ailsa, Elliot, and Emmy.

And now that he is going to have some more time on his hands, I know that his family is going to be glad to see a lot more of him.

So, Ron, happy retirement to you, but let's make it for real this time. I mean, it is true that you have been saying "I will retire next year" for well over a decade now, I think, but I think this time it is going to stick.

But the fact is, you know, we have all really needed you on our teams. It was so important and so critical and it was critical to Gabby and it was critical to the success of my team, and I am sure Congresswoman ANN KIRKPATRICK feels the same.

So on behalf of the State of Arizona and our Nation, thank you, Ron, for your lifetime of hard work and service.

And thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to dedicate a few words to my friend.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON ROSENWORCEL NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Rosenworcel nomination?

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 479 Ex.]

YEAS—68

Baldwin	Grassley	Peters
Bennet	Hassan	Portman
Blackburn	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blunt	Hirono	Rosen
Brown	Inhofe	Sanders
Burr	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	Kelly	Schumer
Capito	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Collins	Lujan	Sullivan
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Cornyn	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Moran	Warren
Ernst	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Young
Graham	Padilla	

NAYS—31

Barrasso	Hoeben	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Braun	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Shelby
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	Paul	Tuberville
Hagerty	Risch	
Hawley	Rounds	

NOT VOTING—1

Booker

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider will be considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 480, Deirdre Hamilton, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 2022.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard Blumenthal, Richard J. Durbin, Angus S. King, Jr., Chris Van Hollen, Elizabeth Warren, Debbie Stabenow, Gary C. Peters, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith, Mark R. Warner, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tammy Duckworth, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tim Kaine, Patrick J. Leahy, Jeff Merkley, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Deirdre Hamilton, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 2022, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 480 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Feinstein	Markey
Bennet	Gillibrand	Menendez
Blumenthal	Hassan	Merkley
Booker	Heinrich	Murkowski
Brown	Hickenlooper	Murphy
Cantwell	Hirono	Murray
Cardin	Kaine	Ossoff
Carper	Kelly	Padilla
Casey	King	Peters
Collins	Klobuchar	Reed
Coons	Leahy	Rosen
Cortez Masto	Lujan	Sanders
Durbin	Manchin	Schatz

Schumer	Stabenow	Warnock
Shaheen	Tester	Warren
Sinema	Van Hollen	Whitehouse
Smith	Warner	Wyden

NAYS—48

Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeben	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Young

NOT VOTING—1

Duckworth

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SINEMA). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 48.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Deirdre Hamilton, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 2022.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:03 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. SINEMA).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 minutes, if I may.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING DELAWARE DAY

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, 234 years ago today, the State of Delaware became the first State to ratify the Constitution. For 1 whole week, Delaware was the entire United States of America. And we opened it up, and 49 other States have joined us since then. For the most part, I think it has turned out well.

But the preamble to the Constitution didn't say that we are going to form a perfect union when they adopted it all those years ago. They said, "in Order to form a more perfect Union . . ."—acknowledging that we are not perfect, haven't gotten it right, and we may never get it right.

But today, we take a big step—or perhaps we can take a big step towards making our Union a bit closer to perfection.